

Abstracts

William Vaughan: History of Art in the Digital Age: Problems and Possibilities, in: *zeitenblicke* 2 (2003), Nr. 1.

This paper aims to provide a broad overview on the impact of computers on the study of the history of art. It begins by considering the nature of the information technology revolution, exploring the often-made analogy between it and the 'Gutenberg' revolution brought about by the development of the printing press. Like Gutenberg, the IT development is technologically driven. However it is driven to a different end, one that emphasizes flexibility as well as dissemination. This flexibility can be a two edged sword. While it enables many new possibilities, it also seems to encourage a more fragmentary and iterative approach to study; to the preference of information over knowledge. It remains, however, something of an open question whether this new approach is a necessary consequence of the structure of the new technology being made available or whether it is more a product of that wider intellectual change that has grown with the emergence of Post-modernist discourses. I would argue that the latter is the case, and that the fragmentary tendencies that can be accommodated by the new technology can also be countered by those who wish to do so. The computer has developed in the way it has as a result of consumer demand. It is up to those who wish to make different demands to feed these into the technological processes as they are expanded and modified. The paper also looks more specifically at issues that particularly affect the study of images, considering both the potential provided by the digital image for new forms of exploration and analysis, and the new opportunities that are emerging via the World Wide Web.

Jens Bove: Die Schule des Sehens und die Transformation kunsthistorischer Lehre unter digitalen Bedingungen, in: *zeitenblicke* 2 (2003), Nr. 1.

Just as the impact of photography and slide projection on the methodology of the history of art caused much discussion at the beginning of the 20th century, the same is happening today with regard to the digital tenet. Within the scope of the project "*Schule des Sehens*" (School for Seeing) it is being tested how net-based art-historical learn modules can actually be, how texts and pictures can be processed appropriately for media, how communication structures can be incorporated and how know-how and critical media competence can be combined. Only when the internet is accepted as not only a learning/teaching environment, but also as a participation and socialisation environment, can an active exchange of knowledge be guaranteed.

Britt Kroepelien: E-learning - an approach to teaching art history in the Internet age, in: **zeitenblicke** 2 (2003), Nr. 1.

Norway's first university course to be taught entirely on the Internet is in art history. In March 2000 the first Internet-based classes for an introductory course in art history started. Due to a modular structure, visually interesting presentations, subject specific approaches and opportunities for two-way communication, it manages to maintain the interest and commitment of the students throughout the two-year duration of the course.

Manfred Thaller: Bemerkungen zu kunsthistorischen Informationssystemen; vornehmlich aus der Sicht der Informatik, in: **zeitenblicke** 2 (2003), Nr. 1.

The use of information systems in the history of art has a long tradition, as it has in the Humanities in general. Very frequently it has been directed by what the researchers responsible for them considered requirements of computer science. Looking closer at computer science, however, we discover that seemingly abstract and general principles quite frequently represent a specific technical situation and can not be meaningfully applied outside of a rather narrowly defined context. This is, specifically, the case with information systems and the logic of Information Retrieval: Here the technical context has changed radically during recent years. It is argued, therefore, that (easily misunderstood and changing) "technical requirements" should not be seen as primary guide lines for the construction of art history information systems, but rather the requirements for the use for such systems, as they become apparent in their use. If computer science is seen as a reference point for the building of such systems, it should be taken from state of the art technical literature, however, and not from reflections on a few easily misunderstood technical terms.

Tobias Nagel: Umbruch oder Abbruch? Beobachtungen zur Situation der EDV-gestützten Dokumentation in den Museen, in: **zeitenblicke** 2 (2003), Nr. 1.

Over the last ten years the knowledge of the decision basics and the comprehension of the general conditions for the use of IT in museums has not really increased. On the contrary: the power of fact changes general conditions in such a way that the computer-aided, scientific documentation is in danger of drifting into the shadows. It is always more often the case that the inventory is given preference over the scientific documentation. The main characteristic of administration work is, however, quantity - history of art, on the other hand, is a qualitative science: the main method is assessing and comparing. It is possible to have databases with their control equipment so open that an extension of the data can be carried out at any time. Software can also be furnished in such a way that the administration work can be carried out with data that meet the scientific requirements. Openness in the systems and a non-ideological view of the development possibilities can solve the supposed contradiction of inventory and documentation. Here, however, critical competence on the part of the database user is absolutely essential. These users must be supported by intensifying the theme of the scientific-methodical consequences of the use of computers in university teaching.

Martin Warnke: Daten und Metadaten - Online-Ressourcen für die Bildwissenschaft, in: **zeitenblicke** 2 (2003), Nr. 1.

This article suggests an XML standard for coding visual empirical data (PETAL) that allows saving, exchanging and publishing pieces of discourse through visual corpora. This approach particularly constitutes a drastic simplification with reference to details in images.

Arthur Engelbert: Bildanalyse und technologischer Standard - ein kritischer Rückblick auf Multimedia, in: **zeitenblicke** 2 (2003), Nr. 1.

This article looks back to the initial stages of manipulable digital images in the context of art. By means of a case study focusing on the altar of Jostam of Rogier van der Weyden, the technologically caused limits of analysing images are discussed. This leads to a critical analysis of prefabricated ways of knowledge transmission and the experience of visibility with implication beyond the field of history of art. Therefore the thesis of this paper is stated in a rather general sense: Handed down imagery does not only exhibit its limited existence in the museum but is already transferred into a technologically limited space.

Matthias Bruhn: Fossilierung in Echtzeit. Wie die Kunstgeschichte ihre Gegenstände erzeugt, in: **zeitenblicke** 2 (2003), Nr. 1.

Since its beginnings as an academic subject, the field of history of arts has continuously been striving to expand its repertoire and areas of study. More than other disciplines it soon had to rely on the possibilities of visual reproduction. History of art communicates its contents via slides and catalogues; it furthermore contributed to the development of relevant media, such as picture albums or photo documentations. Meanwhile, art historicists acquire more and more knowledge in the field of reproductive, mobile photographing of distant locations and condense these photographs into an abstract canon of cultural heritage. Since this practice is in the digital space targeted to an anonymous audience, there might be a danger of decrepitude / fossilization of handed-down ways of viewing; the use of digital media would then not constitute a methodical innovation but would rather cause the opposite.

On the other hand, one has to consider that transformations of knowledge are not only caused by the use of ground breaking, new technologies; it also requires being appropriately embedded into an institution. New ways of communication, such as email and the use of tried and tested techniques, such as 3-D visualizations or the creation of costly data banks and information systems, gradually but permanently change existing specialized structures and modes of thinking. Only a small fraction of the questions related to the use of computers are primarily technical. The discourse of integrating new media could lead to a more professional self-understanding of the contribution of research in art history provided that issues of management, project structuring or fund raising would no longer be treated as minor but rather as an integral part of a scientific methodology.

Stefan Heidenreich: Form und Filter. Was sehen digitale Algorithmen den Bildern an?, in: **zeitenblicke** 2 (2003), Nr. 1.

Wölfflin's basic concepts can be reproduced with the help of digital algorithms. What kind of knowledge can be gained through this method? It was Wölfflin himself who reacted to medial changes by reproducing the double projection of slides within the binary discrepancies of more basic concepts. They can trace a historical difference within the projection of two pictures - a difference that is essential to the field of art history. A digital reproduction of this difference would be tautological: it would reinvent the known. The use of digital algorithms can only be effective if they do not only reproduce the known, but question in the ways in which they can contribute to the expansion of methodical boundaries.

Claus Pias: Das digitale Bild gibt es nicht. Über das (Nicht-)Wissen der Bilder und die informatische Illusion, in: **zeitenblicke** 2 (2003), Nr. 1.

The theory of communication is not a case of what is said, but of what could be said. Under communicative conditions it is not the so-called "contents" that are decisive, but the collocation and the combination of information. The fundamental difference between digital and analogue images is the fact that digital pictures have information. They are limited to the finiteness of a pack of data whose information content is, strictly speaking, what remains after maximal, lossless compression. With the act of violent representation, with the concision of the analogue finiteness the digital achieves the liberty of its ability to be saved, transferred and processed. The entire complex of "digitalisation" and networking means much more than a translation of existing contents into another technical "medium".

The so-called "contents", the ways of communication and the knowledge of a discipline in general, do not exist independent of their technical circumstances, their institutions or staging methods. History of art, as we know it, will not be able to be digitalised, it will inevitably become something different, and we cannot foresee how this will be.

Katja Kwastek: Interaktive Erinnerungsräume - LambdaMOOs und Lernen im CAVE als Erben des Simonides?, in: **zeitenblicke** 2 (2003), Nr. 1.

Cyberspace - in the sense of worldwide networking as well as virtual realities- does not only constitute a new sphere of activity to artists but also opens new perspectives for scientific research and teaching. The art of Memoria was already in the ancient world closely connected to spatial imagination. Whereas ancient, mental spheres of recollection only allowed individual constructs of knowledge, the digital technology enables the creation of virtual communication spheres. These cannot not only facilitate a flexible structuring of knowledge but can also encourage new forms of intellectual discourse. Particularly in the field of the history of art that mainly deals with visually perceived objects, one should examine to what extent new perspectives can be achieved by presenting and discussing the research objects of the field in the virtual space.

Holger Simon: Lernen im digitalen Themenraum. Exploratives Lernen im Internet aus kunsthistorischer Sicht, in: **zeitenblicke** 2 (2003), Nr. 1.

The many advantages of improved presentation of information through the new media and of easily accessible information via the Internet cannot be overseen and should also be considered in the instructional context. They complement as well as improve traditional working and learning structures. If one wants to implement the new media as a didactical tool, media specific constraints of hypertext structures have to be taken into account. Consequently the recipient has to be asked to be active on the Internet in order to move within the network of knowledge. Whereas in a book page numbers pre-define textuality, in the hypertext structure this has to be constructed by the user himself. As a result more autonomous and explorative ways of learning open themselves up to the user, he then becomes the agent determining his learning process for himself and deciding when to ask and answer questions. In this scenario the content and mode of presentation are interdependent. This inevitably results in an equal distribution of tasks across the fields of media didactics, design, computer science and the academic discipline itself. Only in this way can a digital topical space be realized on the Internet, whose conception is illustrated by means of an example.

Sabine Fabo: Das Museum lebt? Der Diskurs der Vernetzung im virtuellen Raum, in: **zeitenblicke** 2 (2003), Nr. 1.

Pieces of art as well as their presentation are increasingly supported by digital technologies. Virtual exhibitions, internet-projects and complex data archives place a piece of art into a medial context that transcends the moment of technical reproducibility. The omnipresent concept of networking makes art as well as its recipients and exhibition sites dynamic. The relationships between these fields are defined and visualized by means of physiological metaphors. Former archives come to a procedural suction in which everything fluctuates, momentarily connects, dissolves and later gets in touch with its surroundings. The virtual space on the other hand reaches precise definitions of its position close to artificial life.

Monika Fleischmann / Wolfgang Strauss: netzspannung.org: Kollektiver Wissensraum und Online-Archiv, in: **zeitenblicke** 2 (2003), Nr. 1.

It is the aim of the research group Media Arts Research Studies (MARS) at the Fraunhofer institute for media communication to explore the opportunities of electronic media with regards to the disclosure and transmission of knowledge for the field of art and the new media. The main point is to visualize and network information in order to create easily accessible and user friendly 'spaces of knowledge' in an interactive and real time manner. For this purpose experimental methods, as well as online-tools and interfaces have been developed whose function is to mediate between virtual and physical space and to try out new forms of accessing knowledge. This article introduces the Internet platform 'netzspannung.org' and formulates the challenges to a media lab, located in the Internet. This lab does not only create a qualitatively demanding accumulation of pieces of information on the digital culture and medial production, but also connects these pieces of information and places them into a context. It furthermore -with the help of its members and partners- constantly expands this new collective space of knowledge and makes it available as a public educational space.